

VZCZCXRO9617  
PP RUEHLN RUEHVK RUEHYG  
DE RUEHDBU #0135/01 0261348  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
P 261348Z JAN 07  
FM AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9490  
INFO RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE  
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY 1959  
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 1980  
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY 2000  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC  
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 1915  
RHMFIUU/DIA FT BELVOIR  
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHINGTON DC  
RUEHDBU/AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE 1071

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 DUSHANBE 000135

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE  
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ABLD](#) [ECPS](#) [OIIP](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KPAO](#) [TI](#)

SUBJECT: INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING BUREAU LAYS GROUNDWORK FOR  
AGREEMENT WITH TAJIK GOVERNMENT

REF: DUSHANBE 100

DUSHANBE 00000135 001.2 OF 002

¶1. (U) SUMMARY. The International Broadcasting Bureau's Jim Lambert briefed Minister of Transportation and Communications Abdurahim Ashurov January 23 on the history of its broadcasts and transmissions from Tajikistan and proposed that the United States and Tajikistan negotiate and sign a bilateral governmental agreement. To date, the International Broadcasting Bureau has conducted its programs on a commercial basis; the current five-year commercial agreement is set to expire in December 2007. Lambert promised to send a draft agreement and invited Ashurov to send a team to Munich to see the facilities and meet with other International Broadcasting Bureau staff. Ashurov promised to consider the agreement, stating that cooperation with the United States on all fronts was a priority; but noting also that the International Broadcasting Bureau's work in Tajikistan can no longer be considered as simply technical or commercial, but rather an issue of broader foreign policy. END SUMMARY

¶2. (SBU) The Ambassador set the stage by explaining the on-going commercial agreement between the International Broadcasting Bureau and Tajik Radio Telecom which allows the International Broadcasting Bureau to broadcast into Pakistan. The International Broadcasting Bureau wants to broaden the scope of its broadcasts to include China, but a commercial agreement does not adequately ensure Tajik government support for transmissions from its territory, so a bilateral governmental agreement is needed. Lambert then fully explained the ongoing broadcasting program, including the recent installation of an 800-kilowatt amplitude modulated transmitter and antenna. The International Broadcasting Bureau plans to install generators to ensure a consistent power supply, and shortwave antenna and transmitter that can reach most of China, in addition to the current Urdu broadcasts into Pakistan. Lambert emphasized the close cooperation with Tajik Radio Telecom, as well as the technology and training already transferred to Tajikistan.

¶3. (U) Because the original equipment leased by Radio Free Asia in 1995 and again by the successor agency International Broadcasting Bureau in 2002 cannot carry the required transmission loads, the International Broadcasting Bureau began installing new technology for Tajik Radio Telecom, and plans further upgrades. This will benefit Tajikistan in the long run, because its technicians are getting the training now, and the equipment will revert to them in ten years. The International

Broadcasting Bureau has also provided building renovations at the broadcasting site. The current program also benefits Tajik Radio Telecom because it is able to sub-lease 12 hours each day on the current transmitters to other broadcasters. (Note: We have just learned that Tajik Radio Telecom's main sub-lessee is Radio Russia. It is ironic that U.S. provided equipment is used to broadcast programs that often portray America in a negative light. End note.)

¶4. (U) The current commercial program expires in December 2007, and there is no current government to government agreement. For this reason, Lambert recommended that the International Broadcasting Bureau send a draft proposal and an invitation for the Tajiks to meet with the International Broadcasting Bureau in Munich in February.

¶5. (U) Minister Ashurov thanked Jim Lambert for the information, and stated that he agreed in principle with the idea of the meeting to discuss a new agreement. He said ongoing as well as new broadcasts would have to be discussed at the policy level within his government to determine if the transmission agreement complied with Tajik law. This is not simply a commercial or technical issue, he said, but one of broader foreign policy. Tajikistan wants to have positive, law-based relationships with all of its neighbors. Ashurov emphasized his interest in cooperation with the United States across all areas within the purview of his ministry.

¶6. (SBU) COMMENT: The meeting represented a first effort to fully brief the Tajik government on the International Broadcasting Bureau's activities, but it will take numerous briefings and meetings to fully explain the scope of the broadcasts and get the Tajiks to agree to an intergovernmental agreement, in addition to extending the commercial agreement with Tajik Radio Telecom which expire in December. Given the growing ties between Tajikistan and China, the Tajik government may not agree to allow us to use its territory for broadcasting to China. We will need to use all our diplomatic efforts in

DUSHANBE 00000135 002.2 OF 002

Tajikistan and Washington to explain that the transmissions do not pose a threat to regional stability or relations. END  
COMMENT

¶7. (U) By briefing the government of Tajikistan and initiating discussions about an inter-governmental agreement, the International Broadcasting Bureau has complied with Embassy Dushanbe's request (Reftel), and the Embassy will once again entertain country clearance requests for its technical advisors for maintenance and repair of existing capacity as well as site surveys for planned expansion. However, the Bureau should not plan on installing new capacity or start new broadcasts without first obtaining agreement from the host government.  
JACOBSON